

Impact Report

CEO Message



As a proud Gurindji and Alawa-Ngalakan man, I have extensive experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, aiming to empower our communities and to promote self-determination. My goal is to assist and strengthen the non-Indigenous sector in effectively supporting these communities nationwide.

Welcome to Country (WtC) plays a vital role in this work as a social enterprise representing First Nations people in the current economic, social, and political environment.

Personally, the vision of WtC is deeply meaningful to me. Coming from a rural and remote background, I often faced challenges in balancing my Aboriginal identity, culture, and language with the expectation of acquiring a Western-style education and finding employment.

The Welcome to Country business model runs a nonprofit marketplace for First Nations products and experiences, generating a multiplier effect. We are very proud to have achieved significant economic and social advantages for the 148 First Nations businesses who collaborated with WtC on our marketplace in FY23.

60 non-Indigenous businesses also collaborated with WtC in FY23. These businesses pay fair royalties to First Nations artists and pay fair wages to First Nations staff who choose to create or work in a way that does not involve running their own business.

Being First Nations led and operated, with a majority First Nations Board of Directors, we are deeply connected

to and immersed in the communities we serve. As the CEO, I'm immensely proud to maintain an average 70% First Nations workforce at WtC, critical to creating a culturally safe marketplace for the businesses we represent.

Consistent with our Theory of Change, one of our key goals is to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs to practise their culture and language, whilst generating an income, on their own terms.

In FY23, we returned over \$1.3 million in revenue for the businesses listed on our platform, and we are excited to grow this impact in the future.

We also directly employed eight First Nations people as part of the core staff team at Welcome to Country.

In the past year, WtC has solidified its transformation into a not-for-profit organisation primarily run by First Nations people. To achieve this, changes were made to the constitution to ensure WtC always has a majority of First Nations Directors. Of the seven Directors, only one is non-Indigenous, and they serve as the main funder of WtC.

Mah Boh Boh (Okay, see you)

Desmond Campbell, CEO





Tess Atie,
Northern Territory Indigenous Tours, NT

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to support greater economic independence of First Nations entrepreneurs to continue maintaining their cultural practices and sharing culture to the world on their own terms.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide additional pathways for First Nations entrepreneurs to connect and share their practices in a culturally safe environment which enables greater economic independence.

Our Vision

Our vision is to see more prosperous First Nations' communities. Welcome to Country aims to support the growth of wealth and success within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

\$1.3 million given back to Operators and Suppliers



Bart Pigram,
Narliija Experiences, WA



Mandy Muir,
Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp, NT

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Social Enterprise



Terry Hunter,
Borroron Coast to Creek Tours, WA

Welcome to Country is a First Nations social enterprise, led by its purpose to improve economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people.

This past year we were proud to receive our accreditation as a social enterprise from Social Traders.

Social enterprises are businesses that trade so they can:

- tackle social problems
- improve communities
- give people access to employment and training, or
- help the environment

Social enterprises are a type of business that aim to create a fair and sustainable world. They are known for their innovative approaches.

Social enterprises must do **three** things:

1. Have a defined primary social, cultural or environmental purpose consistent with a public or community benefit, and
2. Derive a substantial portion of their income from trade, and
3. Invest efforts and resources into their purpose such that public/ community benefit outweighs private benefit.

Welcome to Country champions the growth of wealth and success in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our aim is to assist in achieving economic independence, enhancing self-determination, and safeguarding the preservation and transmission of culture and language.



Store



In FY23, the WtC marketplace listed 3643 products, which were designed and/ or made by First Nations people, from 85 Suppliers located across Australia.

With the 60 Indigenous Suppliers, WtC paid upfront for goods purchased at an agreed wholesale price and then sold at an agreed retail price. Pre-payment ensured that the First Nations micro businesses WtC collaborated with had the necessary cash flow to create the products that were then sold on our marketplace.

We meet the needs of 2 core target markets; individuals and businesses.

Stats that matter for FY23:

Google

CVR: 2.17%
AOV: \$99.66
ROAS: 2.76

Meta

CVR: 2.39%
AOV: \$100.07
ROAS: 3.32

Website sessions:

763,797

Total orders for the year:

11,753

Experiences

In FY23, Welcome to Country collaborated with more than 123 Operators, from different nations across Australia, to offer 262 experiences to our consumers.

The Operators (88 Aboriginal owned and operated and 35 non-Indigenous owned) run for profit businesses working in the tourism sector.

Welcome to Country offers economic and social assistance to Indigenous people, allowing them to maintain their cultural traditions on their traditional lands. We achieve this by connecting these businesses with new individual and corporate customers who wouldn't have discovered them otherwise.

Stats that matter for FY23:

B2C bookings grew 24%

B2C sales grew from

\$145k FY22 to \$180k FY23

Experiences sales overall grew

70% from \$315k in FY23 to \$535k in FY23

“Welcome to Country have been the best promotor and seller for our Yuin Retreat on country experience over the last 3 years. The team have awesome communication skills, are very practical with the client relations and most importantly understand the value of First Nations culture and protocols.”

Dwayne Bannon-Harrison,
Founder and CEO, Ngaran
Ngaran Cultural Awareness

Rosanna Angus,
Oolin Sunday Island Tours, WA

Welcome to Country Impact Report

Commercial

Our committed sales team creates unique experiences that match businesses, agencies and organisations with First Nations experiences nationwide. Additionally, we offer thought-provoking speakers, cultural education, corporate gifting services, as well as assistance with procurement and connecting people with specialised service providers from First Nations communities.



Kate Constantine,
Konstantina Aboriginal Art

In FY23 WtC had over 2900 B2B customers who were receiving experiences or products delivered by the Sales team. One of the B2B clients has been MSS security for a duration of three years by offering them creative solutions to provide Christmas gifts for their employees. This partnership truly reflects the nature of our work.

“A very big thanks for all your help this year with our Client Christmas gifts. They have all been well received and the Christmas Tree decorations were an absolute hit. It is so great working with you both and Welcome to Country”

MSS Security

Stats that matter for FY23:

**B2B sales grew
200%**

**B2B sales doubled from
\$170k FY22 to
\$355k FY23**

Our audience (reach)

WtC strives to change how consumers think about First Nations people and communities. We achieve this by sharing focused and strategic content on our website and social media platforms.

Our primary target audience consists mostly of women aged 35 to 65 residing in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. They belong to the middle to upper class and possess a social consciousness, actively supporting First Nations initiatives.

In FY23, our digital reach was:

**72k+
followers
on Facebook**

**1.6m
reach per month
on Facebook**

**22k+
followers on
Instagram**

**68k
reach per month
on Instagram**

**42k+
subscribers on
EDM**

**74k+
site visitors
per month**



Warradjan Cultural Centre

Our Impact

Welcome to Country has a targeted approach to increasing economic opportunity and independence for First Nations businesses, people, and communities.

Impetus for change First Nations' people have been excluded from economic opportunity and independence, along with the cultural and social respect associated with economic success.

Strategic response

Welcome to Country is an ecommerce intermediary for First Nations' businesses to access greater economic opportunities. By creating a visible, online marketplaces and facilitating e-commerce, First Nations' businesses can more easily reach consumers and increase sales.

Stakeholders

Funders

- Individuals, Corporates, Foundations

Partners

- Corporates
- Other social enterprises
- Industry groups
- Other Indigenous organisations

Government

- National, state, and regional tourism bodies
- Other relevant government bodies

Participants

- First Nations' businesses
- First Nations' employees / jobseekers
- First Nations' people and communities
- Individual, corporate, and educational consumers

Activities

- Connecting First Nations' businesses to consumers
- Connecting consumers to First Nations' businesses
- Providing trusted, authentic marketplaces for First Nations' businesses to connect
- Supporting pathways to market and growth for First Nations' businesses

Mandy Muir,
Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp



By increasing exposure to First Nations' products and experiences Welcome to Country expands economic opportunities while increasing respect for First Nations' businesses.

Outputs + Shorter-term

Economic outcomes

Operators and suppliers receive additional income through Welcome to Country

Cultural outcomes for First Nations' people and communities

Increased opportunities to engage with culture and community

General outcomes

Increased exposure to First Nations businesses, products and services

Medium-term

- Increased opportunities for employment for First Nations' people
- Reduced barriers to entry and growth for First Nations' entrepreneurs
- Increased economic independence for First Nations' people and communities
- Increased visibility of First Nations businesses

- Increased knowledge of and connection to culture
- Increased feelings of cultural safety and pride in cultural identity

- Increased opportunities to engage with and learn from First Nations people and/or about First Nations culture, history and art
- Increased knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia
- Increased desire to better understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia

Longer-term outcomes

Expanded economic networks for First Nations' businesses, people and communities

Increased cultural resilience

Increased pride in, and more highly value, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage of Australia

Impact

First Nations' people and communities have equality of opportunity, economic independence, and flourishing economic networks

First Nations' people recognise the strength of their cultural identity and experience improved health and wellbeing

Respect for and recognition of First Nations people's unique and valuable contribution to Australian history, culture, economy, and society

Entrepreneurial Support

WtC supports its First Nation Operators and Suppliers through the provision of targeted support to help each business to grow on their own terms.

In FY23, this support was provided in the form of assistance to list on the platform, product development, marketing skills and data insights (and more).

In particular, WtC was delighted to receive a grant from Mannifera to establish a Product Development Fund. This is a replenishing pool of money that Welcome to Country makes available to existing Suppliers to our online Shop, via no interest micro loans, to facilitate an expansion of their business.



Rainy King



Yellow Water Cruises

Rainy King

Being successful in accessing the funds from the micro loan has had a significant impact on my hobby/business. Firstly, my overall attitude and confidence has changed towards what I do, and made me think of where I would like to take my arts career/practice going forward.

I was able to use the funds to invest in a major piece of equipment (slab roller) for my studio that has had a significant impact on my ability to make my coolamons. Without the funds I was never going to be able to afford to buy it myself. I was also able to invest in buying raw materials and supplies to start to develop and make my own glazes instead of buying commercial ones that are quite expensive and can only be bought in small amounts. So overall, the fund has improved my capacity to produce items from home and not the community studio where I previously had to use their equipment, and also save money by making my own glazes.

Talwali Coffee

We extend our deepest appreciation to Welcome to Country's Product Development Fund for their pivotal role in catapulting our business innovation forward. Their timely provision of capital not only expedited the acquisition of crucial equipment but also remarkably accelerated the expansion of our product range development.

The absence of interest and the flexibility in repayment terms alleviated immense financial stress. This allowed us to channel our focus entirely towards product development and innovation, unencumbered by the burden of additional financial obligations.

Moreover, their unwavering support throughout the entire process was invaluable. From the initial application to the disbursement of funds, their guidance and assistance were instrumental in navigating the complexities of financial aid.

Partnerships & Advocacy

In FY23, WtC benefited from 22 partnerships that are designed to improve our offerings and to provide economic and social outcomes for First Nation businesses and communities.

Being a small social enterprise, partnerships are essential for our strategic approach. Collaborations can help enhance our brand and even generate direct income for our Suppliers and Operators.

Since joining WtC in October 2022, Desmond Campbell has focused on meeting with important stakeholders and establishing the marketplace as the top destination for First Nations experiences and products. Desmond has had over 60 meetings and has attended 20 key events.



WtC team at Supply Connect 2023



Financials

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Assets	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue		
Cooperative Marketing Revenue	15,000	82,348
Experience Revenue	444,895	307,266
Freight Revenue	72,333	78,788
Grant revenue	1,532,500	1,545,451
Shop Revenue	1,459,872	1,365,340
Partnership and Brokerage Revenue	35,382	-
Other Revenue	75,306	35,723
Total Revenue	3,635,288	3,414,916
Cost of sales		
Opening Stock	(87,588)	(104,514)
Purchases - Stock	(1,051,841)	(813,498)
Closing Stock	180,190	87,588
Freight Expenses	(8,689)	(11,605)
Operator Expenses	(396,921)	(253,015)
Other Direct Expenses	(3,797)	(178,176)
Total Cost of sales	630,616	614,830
Gross profit	2,266,642	2,141,696
Plus Other Income	-	62,030
Expenses		
Operating Expenses	-	(3,500)
Administrative Expenses	(218,925)	(223,997)
Cooperative Marketing Expenses	-	(34,131)
Depreciation	(13,263)	(12,859)
Employment Expenses	(1,220,785)	(1,334,051)
Marketing & Advertising	(490,974)	(470,797)
Professional Fees	(176,617)	(240,025)
Rent & Utilities	(221,095)	(18,710)
Research & Development	-	(17,500)
Travel & Accommodation	(39,525)	(34,320)
Total Expenses	(2,381,184)	(2,389,890)
Surplus/(deficit) before income taxes	(114,542)	(186,164)
Income tax	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) from continuing operations	(114,542)	(186,164)
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(114,542)	(186,164)
Total comprehensive income for the year	(114,542)	(186,164)

For the full audited financial statements please refer to the ACNC.

Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2023

Assets	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	283,653	318,832
Trade and other receivables	94,681	21,657
Inventories	180,190	87,588
Other assets	8,300	374,504
Total current assets	566,824	802,581
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	40,350	35,164
Intangible assets	579,666	579,666
Other assets	10,600	-
Total non-current assets	630,616	614,830
Total assets	1,197,440	1,417,411
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	92,609	149,920
Provisions	36,756	61,919
Other liabilities	239,296	262,249
Total current liabilities	368,661	474,088
Total liabilities	368,661	474,088
Net assets	828,779	943,323
Equity		
Retained earnings	828,781	943,323

For the full audited financial statements please refer to the ACNC.



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